

Message Text

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INFO AMEMBASSY NASSAU 3832

UNCLAS STATE 000136

REF: A. LONDON 15859; B. LONDON 16186

THE FOLLOWING REPEAT LONDON 16850 ACTION
SECSTATE 30 DECEMBER 1974. QUOTE:

UNCLAS LONDON 16850

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: TSPA, UK

SUBJ: NASA MOBILE LASER RANGING STATION ON BERMUDA AND
GRAND TURK

REF: (A) LONDON 15859; (B) LONDON 16186

1. WE HAVE NOW RECEIVED CONFIRMATION IN WRITING FROM
FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE THAT WE HAVE HMG APPROVAL
TO PROCEED WITH CONSTRUCTION OF LASER STATIONS BERMUDA
AND GRAND TURK. (PREVIOUS APPROVALS HAD BEEN VERBAL.)
WRITTEN CONFIRMATION IS CONTAINED IN LETTER DATED DEC. 23
FROM DAVID, DEFENSE DEPT., IN WHICH HE ASKS AGAIN FOR
FURTHER INFORMATION TO RELIEVE CONCERN BRITISH HAVE ABOUT
POSSIBLE DANGERS TO AIR TRAFFIC WHICH MAY ARISE ONCE
LASERS START OPERATING. DEPARTMENT WILL RECALL THIS IN-
FORMATION WAS FIRST REQUESTED BY BRITISH ON DEC 4(REF A)
BUT TO DATE WE HAVE HAD NO REPLY. WOULD APPRECIATE RE-
QUESTED INFO ASAP.

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2. FOLLOWING IS FULL TEXT OF FCO LETTER:

ESTABLISHMENT OF NASA MOBILE LASER RANGING STATIONS ON
GRAND TURK AND BERMUDA

1. WE ARE SATISFIED THAT YOUR PROPOSAL TO BUILD
A MOBILE LASER RANGING STATION WITHIN THE NASA BASE ON
BERMUDA FALLS WITHIN THE TERMS OF THE 1961 AGREEMENT (AS
MODIFIED BY THE 1963 EXCHANGE OF NOTES) AND THAT THE
STATION ON GRAND TURK FALLS WITHIN ANNEX F, PARAGRAPH
2(A) OF THE 1961 AGREEMENT ON UNITED STATES DEFENCE AREAS
BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT OF THE FEDERATION OF THE WEST INDI-
ES AND THE GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA. WE
ARE FOR OUR PART CONTENT THAT YOU SHOULD NOW GO AHEAD WITH
THE INSTALLATIONS. I BELIEVE YOU KNOW THAT THE GOVERNOR
OF BERMUDA HAS BEEN BRIEFED BY YOUR CONSUL-GENERAL AND HAS
GIVEN HIS APPROVAL FOR THE PLAN. T E GOVERNOR OF THE TURKS
AND CAICOS ISLANDS HAS ALSO INDICATED HIS AGREEMENT.
2. HOWEVER, WE ARE STILL A LITTLE CONCERNED ABOUT THE POS-
SIBLE DANGER TO AIR TRAFFIC IN THE VICINITY OF BERMUDA AND
GRAND TURK THAT MAY ARISE ONCE THE LASERS START OPERATING
WE SHOULD BE GRATEFUL IF YOU WOULD LET US HAVE A LITTLE
MORE INFORMATION SO THAT WE CAN MEASURE WHAT YOU PROPOSE
AGAINST ACCEPTED SAFETY STANDARDS. WE WOULD PARTICULARLY
LIKE TO KNOW:
 - A. THE WAVE LENGTH OF THE LASERS INSTALLED;
 - B. THE POWER OUTPUT OR ENERGY OUTPUT;
 - C. WHETHER IT IS PULSED OR CONTINUOUS WAVE; AND
 - D. ANY OTHER INFORMATION RELEVANT TO THE PROBLEM OF
AIR SAFETY.

INDEED, BECAUSE WE BEAR SOME RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE
SAFETY OF CIVIL AND MILITARY AIR TRAFFIC IN THE
VICINITY OF BOTH ISLANDS, WE SHOULD LIKE TO BE SATISFIED
ON THIS ASPECT BEFORE THE LASERS ARE BROUGHT INTO OPER-
ATION. IN ADDITION, WE CONSIDER THAT IT WOULD BE THE
RESPONSIBILITY OF THE UNITED STATES AUTHORITY CONCERNED
TO ENSURE THAT SUITABLE WARNING IS GIVEN TO CIVIL AND
MILITARY AIRCRAFT OPERATING IN THE AREA OF THE TIMES OF
OPERATION OF THE STATIONS AND THAT NORMAL AIR INFORMATION
SERVICE (AIS) ACTION AND PROCEDURES WOULD BE FOLLOWED IF
APPROPRIATE, YOURS SINCERELY, T J DAVID, DEFENCE DEPART-
MENT.

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